

Message Text

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13-11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 080936Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9658

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0190

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, JO

SUBJECT: WEST BANK RELECTIONS: ISRAELI AMENDMENT TO JORDANIAN
ELECTION LAW

REF TEL AVIV 151, JERUSALEM 19

1. EMBOFF JAN 7 DISCUSSED JORDANIAN ELECTORAL LAW AS
AMENDED FOR PURPOSES OF WEST BANK MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
WITH MFA OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
(ARIEL).

2. ARIEL CONFIRMED THAT JORDANIAN LAW HAD BEEN AMENDED BY
DELETING WORD "MALE", BUT ADDED THAT LAW STILL REQUIRED
ALL VOTERS TO BE MUNCIPAL TAXPAYERS. HE SAID LAW ALSO
RETAINS WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS JORDANIAN PROVISION THAT EACH
TAXPAYER IS ALLOWED ONE VOTE FOR EVERY JORDANIAN DINAR
PAID IN TEXES. ACCORDING TO ARIEL, PRACTICAL RESULT OF
AMENDMENT WILL BE TO ALLOW TAXPAYERS ELIGIBLE FOR MORE THAN
ONE VOTE TO ENROLL FEMALE (DEPENDENTS AND EMPLOYEES)
AS WELL AS MALE.

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3. ARIEL ADMITTED HE WAS NOT EXACTLY SURE HOW THIS SYSTEM WOULD OPERATE IN PRACTICE. HE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT MILITARY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WERE CERTAIN THAT ELECTORATE WOULD BE QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF 1972 BECAUSE OF TWO FACTORS: (A) RISING STANDARD OF LIVING ON WEST BANK HAD TURNED MANY ADDITIONAL PEOPLE INTO TAXPAYERS OVER PAST FOUR YEARS; AND (B) TAXES WERE NOW BEING IMPOSED FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES (HE SPECIFIED GARBAGE COLLECTION), AND TUS ELIGIBLE VOTERS WERE NOT RESTRICTED TO PROPERTY OWNERS.

4. COMMENT: IT IS STILL UNCLEAR EXACTLY NOW ELECTORAL ROLLS WILL BE ADMINISTERED. MILITARY GOVERNMENT ACTION, HOWEVER, SEEMS TO BE ATTEMPT TO MEET DEMAND THAT LAW BE MODERNIZED, MINIMIZE CRITICISM BASED ON TAMPERING WITH JORDANIAN LAW BY OCCUPYING POWER, AND MAXIMIZE POSSIBILITY THAT TRADITIONAL LEADERS WILL BE RETURNED TO OFFICE.
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